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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 000791

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: ANGOLAN-TRAINED CONGOLESE TROOPS LOOK GOOD -  
COMPARATIVELY SPEAKING

Classified By: PolCouns MSanderson, reasons 1.4 b/d.

11. (C) PolCouns attended the May 6 "graduation" ceremony for the two brigades of Congolese troops trained by the Angolans at Kitona base (in Bas-Congo province). The visit was organized by the Angolan Ambassador and Chief of the Congolese Army General Kisempia, and several CIAT Ambassadors (including the French, British and South African) and SRSG William Swing attended, as did Congolese Minister of Defense Adolphe Onusumba and the Angolan chief of the army. Compared to the average Congolese soldier -- and especially given private complaints by the Angolan trainers that they hadn't been given good troops with which to work -- the graduating soldiers were pretty good. Although they had to stand at parade rest for almost four hours (thanks to the late arrival of the Defense Minister and the two army chiefs) the soldiers did not break ranks and, when the dignitaries did arrive, the troops snapped into "present arms" in perfect synchronization, marching in step and rank order. They also conducted a field exercise using live ammunition (including live mortar rounds, which startled the onlookers).

12. (C) Comment: These are the major Congolese elements intended to work with Monuc in combatting the FDLR elements in the two Kivus, should military action be needed. Even with their Angolan trainers accompanying them, however (which currently is the plan), and despite their fairly remarkable progress (by Congolese terms) they are far from ready for a lead role in fighting the FDLR. They might, however, be able to accompany the Pakistani and Indian troops in a well-defined supporting role.  
DOUGHERTY